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a pupil of her father, Raymond Bonheur. She exhibited her first picture in Paris, in 1841, since which period her works have often appeared before the French public. The details of her artist life and personal habits are well known in the United States (where curiosity is ever alive to persons and occupations out of the common order of things), through the gossip of foreign letter-writers. The peculiar love of a woman for animals, and the vigor of her brush in portraying them, readily account for the interest she excites here. Her principal work is "The Horse Fair," in which her merits as an artist are most strikingly displayed; this was exhibited at Paris, in 1853, and now forms one of the art-treasures of Mr. Wright's beautiful gallery at Weehawken. Since 1849, Rosa Bonheur has gratuitously conducted a school of design for young girls. Besides painting animals she has occasionally given them in sculpture, not, however, with any greater success than in painting. Rosa Bonheur's execution is bold and decisive; her coloring is good, and sometimes fine. She rarely attempts to portray animals with the sentiment and humor which Landseer gives in his art, and yet never without life and fine character. Her works scarcely go beyond the limits of portraiture. In France, where artists are more severely scrutinized than with us, they are not recognized as within the realm of poetic art, being generally spoken of as pleasing the English, which is significant of a very material phase of art (except when English taste is otherwise gratified by foreign artists painting their national subjects.) Rosa Bonheur has received two medals. She bears a most exemplary character, and is an honor to the profession. In addition to The Horse Fair, mentioned above, there are fine works by this artist in the collections of John Wolfe and August Belmont.

MISSAL AND OTHER MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATIONS.

(From "Painting Popularly Explained," by T. O. GULICK and J. TIMBS.)

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATIONS.—The taste for decorating manuscripts existed among the ancients. The Egyptian papyrus, with its colored hieroglyphs, vignettes, and rubric-like initials, was a veritable illuminated MS. Greek and Roman MSS. likewise had their red titles, or commencements and initials. The portraits which Marco Varro inclosed in his books, are thought by some to have been painted; but their number renders this incredible. Seneca, however, in his treatise *De Tranquillitate Animi*, speaks of books ornamented with figures. The most ancient specimen of calligraphy extant is probably the Virgil of the fourth or fifth century in the Vatican. It contains fifty miniatures, but their design and execution are inferior. In the celebrated collection of the Vatican are some of the most valuable MSS. known. Among these is a very interesting MS. of the Book of Joshua, which, though according to an inscription on it, not of earlier date than the ninth or eighth century, is doubtless from some work of the best early Christian time. It is a *volumen*, or roll of parchment of more than thirty feet long. The illuminations are executed in few colors, and differ greatly from the highly-finished splendor of later Byzantine miniatures; but, excepting in the extremities, it has few of the Byzantine defects; on the contrary, there is much classical spirit, and costume and weapons are still perfectly antique. In the Ambrosian Library at Milan, fifty-eight miniatures have been preserved, fragments of a manuscript Homer, which may also date from the fourth or fifth century, judging from the broad and solid manner in

which the colors are applied and the treatment of the drapery. After the seventh century, while the Byzantine style was adopted in Italy for mosaics, a style of greater license and degeneracy prevailed in Italian MSS., which may be called, from the ruling power, the "Longobardian."

We have already alluded to the splendid embellishments of the Byzantine MSS. The best miniatures of the Byzantine time do not, however, actually belong to the Byzantine school, but are copies of earlier Roman works. For instance, the most celebrated *Codices* of the time of the Macedonian emperors, now in the Bibliothèque Impériale at Paris, are copies and facsimiles of the best Romano-Christian works. The finest miniatures are contained in a codex of sermons by St. Gregory Nazianzen; and some of these are repetitions of compositions of the fifth and sixth centuries, representing the principal events from the creation of the world to the time of St. Gregory. A Psalter of the ninth century is still more interesting, from its numerous personifications of natural objects and abstract qualities in the manner of the antique; the invention of which the art of the time was totally incapable. Among works essentially Byzantine is the well-known costly Menologium, or calendar, executed about 1000 A.D., for the Emperor Basilus II. Though imperfect, there being but the months from September to February inclusive, it contains no less than 430 splendid miniatures on a gold ground, the work of eight artists, whose names recur at intervals. The subjects include scenes from the life of Christ, the lives and martyrdoms of the saints, and the history of the church, or rather its synods.

The more important Greek MSS. are, however, of the period of the Comnene emperors—from 1056 till 1204. Of these the *Dogmatica Panoplia* or Complete Defensive Armor against Heresies, in the Vatican, is remarkable for its brilliant coloring and the stiff gold-embroidered garments; while a collection of sermons for the feast of the Virgin is noteworthy for the great beauty of decorative ornament in its initials. An *Evangelarium*, or the four Gospels, executed in the reign of Johannes Comnenus (*Biblioteca d'Urbino*), is also interesting; and a MS. of St. John Calimachus (in the Vatican), contains some very delicately-executed and curious designs. It is called *The Ladder*, from the favorite allegory of the Virtues as the steps leading to Heaven, and the Vices as those which lead to Hell. The Byzantine miniatures of the thirteenth century partake of the general degeneracy of the style.

We have given Dr. Kugler's reasons for believing in the comparatively independent origin of the "Romanesque style;" and what he remarks of the Italian MSS. of this period decidedly supports the opinion: "In the Italian manuscripts of this period a composition and construction are displayed, which, however rude and careless, are still, upon the whole, allied with those of the greater works of art. Here, as in the empire of the East, the copying of older works was usual, though pursued with less slavishness of manner, being treated more in the spirit of a free repetition. The miniatures belonging to a Virgil in the Vatican, probably of the thirteenth century, consist apparently of freely transposed antique motives, in which it is difficult to distinguish the defects of the first hand from those of the second. Not only the general invention of this work, but every detail also of position, action and drapery, and even the highly placed line of horizon, lead us directly back to the late Roman style of art. The heads, also, have the antique breadth and youthfulness; all, however, seen under the disguise of a barbaric transformation."

In the West, Charlemagne and his grandson, Charles the Bald, greatly encouraged the transcription and embellishment of manuscripts, which are hence termed Carolingian. The Bibles of Charles the Bald, preserved at Paris in the Imperial Library, and at Rome in the Benedictine monastery of St. Calixtus, are very beautifully decorated. The series of illustrations in the latter (the so-called Charlemagne Bible), and which afterwards constantly recur with few variations, is known as the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*, and contain subjects from the Old and New Testaments which embrace the entire history of the fall and redemption of man.

The English MSS. are fully equal to the Continental; and at an early period the Anglo-Saxons were even surpassed by the Irish and the monks of Iona. The *Benedictional* of St. Ethelwold (963-967), in the Duke of Devonshire's collection, is the most complete example of early English art. It was executed by a monk of Hyde Abbey (then the most celebrated place in England for such works) named Godeman, for Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester. An English Psalter, in the British Museum, of the early part of the fourteenth century, which was presented to Queen Mary by Baldwin Smith, represents the art of the period unusually well. The celebrated Bedford missal, now in the possession of Sir John Tobin of Liverpool, who purchased it for £1100, was executed in France for John, Duke of Bedford, in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and contains the only known portrait of the Regent of France. The great majority of illuminated books were religious; some few, however, such as romances, were secular, and are particularly valuable for their illustrations of Costume, etc. Of these, one of the most frequently decorated during the fifteenth century was the French *Romaunt de la Rose*, a poem of the thirteenth century. The British Museum copy is considered the most beautiful. Our national collection of MSS. is now very rich, and additional facilities for obtaining some knowledge of manuscript illuminations have been afforded the public of late by the exhibition of the paintings in glass cases.

Foreign Correspondence, Items, etc.

Dear Crayon :

LONDON, February 9, 1860.

Since I wrote last, I have seen all the oil pictures bequeathed by Turner to the English nation, in number over one hundred. Most of them are large works, and represent every period of his practice from the early imitations of Wilson and Poussin to the subsequent periods when he escaped entirely from the black-and-brown school and painted things in their true color. His oil pictures fill three large rooms, and are seen to great advantage. The first room contains his early works, from 1797 to about 1813, and include many of his best pictures. Of these, the *Snow-storm*, with Hannibal crossing the Alps, is a grand picture, with a very powerful effect of chiaroscuro, and with fine qualities of grey color; and *The Frosty Morning* is remarkable for great breadth and unity of effect. There are many other pictures in this room equally worthy of mention, and one in particular of a wreck which has the most magnificent sky I ever saw painted; the clouds seem to roll up higher and higher the longer you look, and are so full of energy one can almost hear the thunder bellowing among their mountain masses. The second room contains thirteen of his largest and best works in respect to color and composition; they belong to the period

between 1814 and 1832. *Crossing the Brook* is one of the most popular of his pictures, and is certainly one of the finest landscapes ever painted; the distance is especially noticeable for its great breadth and beautiful and almost boundless expanse. *The Bag of Baie*, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Ulysses and Polyphemus* are magnificent. The next room contains pictures painted between 1830 and 1850, some of them being very fine, and some very bad, and several unfinished, which are interesting, as they show his process and method of working; both good and bad contain qualities peculiar to Turner, and some of them, especially in parts, constitute his most wonderful works. Taken as a whole, they do not please me as much as the works in the second room. The finest among them are the *Apollo and Daphne in the Vale of Tempe*, which has some beautiful mountain drawing on the right; *Phryne going to the Bath as Venus*, in which the distance is filled with architecture most beautifully composed and painted; *The Old Téméraire* is one of the most perfect pieces of splendid color I ever saw; *Steamboat off a Harbor making Signal in a Snow-storm* is very fine in chiaroscuro, and wonderful for variety of grey color. There are several fine *Venices*, and among them the *Sons of Venice going to Sea*, which is, perhaps, the best one. Most of this class of his works have changed very much, and some are complete wrecks.

Turner is seen to great advantage in his water-color drawings and sketches; the latter displaying his power marvellously. The sum of detail and fact given in the slightest sketch is beyond anything I ever saw. It is highly interesting to see how carefully he follows these transcripts of nature in his pictures. Taken as a whole, I think his water-color drawings surpass his oil pictures; they show greater unity and are less ambitious and are more quiet. He never seems to have that command over oil which he had over water-color, and appears to have been constantly checked in his execution by a want of method and the toughness of the paint. In his efforts to overcome this defect in the material by the use of turpentine, water-color and varnish, he has spoiled many of his later works; for, where the paint has not cracked or fallen off, it has changed color, and, in many cases, has entirely disappeared, leaving only a faint stain on the surface, so that several of these pictures are, indeed, but "ghosts" of what they once were.

I wish to say a few words on what I regard as the reason why Turner's later pictures are not so well liked as the early ones. It is because they are very subtle and refined in execution, and the shades are so delicate and aerial that, at first sight, the pictures look flat when compared with the exaggerated darks of his early works. They are, besides, so crowded with material that the mind is overwhelmed and confused; and it is not until one has analyzed part by part that he can begin to understand their wonderful excellence. Few are willing to take this trouble; they expect to find everything on the surface, and to read and understand at once as they run through the gallery. But Turner affords no opportunity for this superficial approval—and neither does nature.

Turner's little pictures lack unity in composition; they are too much crowded with material, and in many of them the foregrounds seem to want solidity. This latter objection, however, may not be a fault, as the interest of the picture is generally in the middle-ground and distance; and it may be that this way of treating the foreground is what gives to these pictures such a wonderful sense of space and air. Turner has at least given examples enough to show that a lack of ability to draw